

**CITY OF MESA**  
**HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)**  
**March 26, 2014 Minutes**

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014,  
at 6:00pm in the First Floor East/West Conference Room, 20 E. Main Street, Ste. 170.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Denise Heap, Chair  
Mark Tompert, Vice Chair  
Cheryl Anderson  
Karen Frias- Long  
Frank Johnson  
Tony Liuzzo  
Cliff Moon

MEMBERS ABSENT

Juan Panchano  
Talmage Pearce  
Lu Ann Schmidt

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Arenas  
Ruth Giese  
Nellie Moller  
Justin Smothers  
John Wesley  
John Williams

GUESTS

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Ms. Heap began the meeting at 5:58pm.

2. Items from Citizens Present.\*

There were no citizens that requested to speak.

3. Approval of minutes from the February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Liuzzo to approve the February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 meeting minutes, Mr. Tompert seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Discuss and take action on Mesa Police Department Report.

- Report on police related incidents and activities.

Ms. Moller, staff member with the Mesa Police Department (MPD), introduced Cmdr. John Williams from the Central Station. Cmdr. Williams has been with the department for 14 years, working as a School Resource Officer, Auto Theft Detective, Sargent, Lieutenant and now two months into appointment as Commander. Cmdr. Williams is part of the MPD Diversity Team and would like to focus on public outreach. Cmdr. Williams also has an interest in providing direction and mentorship for the youth. Cmdr. Williams provided his contact information and invited the board members to speak with him at any time regarding concerns in the Central District.

Mr. Tompert and Ms. Anderson suggested a meeting with Marc Community Resources, where they are employed, in order to strengthen the collaboration with MPD since many of their facilities are located in the Central District. Mr. Moon invited Cmdr. Williams back to Carson Jr. High which is where he served as the School Recourse Officer. Ms. Heap noted that the Youth Diversity Education Team committee is currently working on finding more funding for MPD's M.E.S.A. program to implement at other schools such as Carson Jr. High.

Ms. Moller noted that Cmdr. Williams along with the MPD Diversity Team will be marching in the upcoming Phoenix Pride Parade on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

- Updates and scheduling of upcoming Police Advisory Board meetings.

The Senior Advisory Board is scheduled to meet on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014 at 9:30am at the Red Mountain Multigenerational Center. The Asian Community Advisory Board will be meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 5:30pm at Dobson Pediatrics, 2508 S. Dobson Rd., in Dr. Ruth Tan Lim's Office. The first quarterly Mesa Police Central Community meeting is scheduled to meet on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 6pm at the Central District Police Station Community Room. The Hispanic Advisory Board will be meeting on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 6pm at Fiesta District Community Room, 1010 W. Grove.

5. Hear and discuss an update on the General Plan.

Mr. Wesley, Planning Director for the City of Mesa, provided an update on the General Plan. Mr. Wesley advised that the second draft (both short and full versions) is currently available on the city's webpage. Mr. Wesley explained that Arizona State Statutes require an updated General Plan every ten years to help guide the development of communities. Mesa has grown rapidly in the past thirty years and anticipates additional 170k residents in the next thirty years. The focus of this plan has been trying to answer the question: What do we need to do to create a more recognizable, self-sufficient city that attracts employment and provides a high quality living environment?

The three identified guiding principles for the General Plan are: create and maintain a variety of great neighborhoods, grow and maintain stable and diverse jobs, and provide rich public spaces and cultural resources. The plan will be broken down into four sections: Introduction, Transforming the City- creating a sense of place, Supporting Infrastructure, and Administration/ Implementation. Mr. Wesley identified some underlying issues: high quality development, changing demographics, public health, urban design and place-making and responding to a desert environment and advised of the inclusive terminology that will be used. For example, the vision statement will read: "Residents feel a sense of inclusion and ownership in their community..."

Neighborhoods are an important part of the community and Mesa would like to encourage neighborhoods to maintain value over time. Mr. Wesley noted that over 70k dwelling units are expected to be added in the future. Description of key elements needed for strong neighborhoods are: safe, clean, healthy living environments, build community and foster social interaction, connectivity and walkability, provide for diversity, neighborhood character and personality, and quality design and development. Mesa plans to create and maintain a variety of great neighborhoods by encouraging the appropriate mix of uses that will bring life and energy to neighborhoods while protecting them from encroachment by incompatible development, reviewing new development for the mix of uses and form of development needed to establish lasting neighborhoods, and enhancing the neighborhood outreach program to improve development of neighborhood leaders, educate neighborhood residents regarding property maintenance responsibilities, and provide a better forum for citizen engagement and communication.

Another important element of community growth is stable and diverse jobs. Mesa's workforce is expected to increase by around 130k jobs. Some of key elements in promoting employment will be: H.E.A.T.T. Initiative (healthcare, education, aerospace, tourism and technology), skilled and knowledgeable human capital, sense of place/quality employment centers, regional collaboration, infrastructure, and retail development and revitalization. In order to meet this goal, Mesa plans to preserve designated employment areas for future job growth, uphold a business service approach that facilitates the successful attraction, expansion, and retention of businesses in Mesa, and continue to develop the educational resources available in Mesa and work with education providers and industry leaders in an effort to provide skilled workers for Mesa businesses and to assist students in moving from the classroom to the workforce.

Mr. Wesley advised that there will also be a need for quality amenities to attract and retain jobs and residents. This will be done by creating quality public spaces that are: accessible and connected, active, appropriately scaled and integrated, inviting and comfortable, safe, and unique in character. Key features for cultural resources will be: variety, accessibility, active participation and a sense of ownership, nurturing and stimulating curiosity, regional scale and local scale, preserving the past and creating a future identity, and supporting and encouraging artists. In order to provide rich, high quality public spaces and cultural amenities, Mesa will consider the design and redesign of public buildings and facilities will include consideration of how to provide rich public spaces where appropriate, design of neighborhoods, neighborhood village centers, mixed use activity districts, downtown, and transit districts should consider and include the development of a variety of public gathering places appropriate for the scale and location of the development, and co-locate community facilities such as libraries, parks, fire stations, museums, etc. where feasible to increase the opportunities for social interaction and reduced costs.

The final section discussed, as required by the State Statute, is land use. Land use is depicted on a Character Map which includes the key areas: Neighborhoods (such as large lot/rural, traditional, suburban, manufactured homes), Neighborhood Village Centers, Downtown, Mixed Use Activity Districts (such as community-scale and regional-scale), Mixed Use Community, Employment Districts (such as business parks, industrial and employment core), Specialty Districts (such as education campuses, medical campuses and airports), Transit Districts (station areas and corridors), and Parks and Open Spaces. In areas with a Neighborhood character development will be reviewed for the impact on improving or maintaining the existing neighborhood and achieving the development and design standards for neighborhoods set forth in Chapter Four of the General Plan, and for compliance with any approved sub-area or neighborhood plan for the specific area.

Mr. Tompert questioned if there are any plans for the Fiesta District area. In response, Mr. Wesley stated that there are some areas currently undergoing some reconstruction which will help improve the aesthetics of the area. There has also been an urban-designed apartment complex approved for development on the southwest corner of Extension and Southern. Otherwise, the City is currently trying to attract businesses that will comply with the vision for the area. Mr. Tompert questioned if there any proposals for high-rises in any area of Mesa. Mr. Wesley answered by stating that the plan does outline several areas such as Downtown and the Fiesta area where building height is encouraged.

In closing, Mr. Wesley provided the remaining timeline for the General Plan before adoption: second draft plan is currently available for the 60-day review process for public comments, public hearings will be held at the Planning and Zoning Board meetings on April 16<sup>th</sup>, April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 21<sup>st</sup>, then the City Council is scheduled to take action on June 16<sup>th</sup> in order to be placed on the November 2014 ballot for a public vote. Mr. Wesley asked that the board members review the General Plan and, if they approve of it, state their support at the next meeting. Ms. Heap extended her thanks to Mr. Wesley and his team for their work and thanked him for implementing some of her suggestions mentioned at the planning meetings on behalf of the board.

6. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Issues Research and Action Team.

- Report on the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Community Conversation on Discrimination series.

Mr. Moon announced that the dates and locations for the series have been set and staff will be sending event information (i.e. flier, press release) via email for board members to distribute. Mr. Moon explained that previous arrangement for facilitators and note takers have fallen through, therefore asked board members to send staff contacts information for any qualified individuals who may be interested. Mr. Moon outlined the characteristics of a desirable candidate. Mr. Moon also encouraged all board members to participate and confirm their attendance with staff. Ms. Heap announced a donation for refreshments for the first event, and that they plan to have raffle items for the third event,

but still needed recommendations for the second event. Dr. Liuzzo stated that he would make a personal donation for refreshments for the second event.

- Report on the speaker's bureau.

This agenda item was not discussed.

7. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Disabilities Action Team.

- Provide an update on the awareness campaign for service animals.

Mr. Tompert advised that Ms. Heap has drafted a letter that they will use to distribute to businesses in order to inform them on the rights and regulations of service animals. They will outline the differences between a 'service animal' and a 'comfort animal' as well as the types of animals that are legally accepted in such roles.

- Report on ways of educating the community on mental health issues.

Mr. Tompert noted that the CFO and CEO of Marc Community Resources will be making a presentation on the history of the organization, services they provide, and their role in the community at the next board meeting. Ms. Heap added that the MPD Diversity Team will help distribute the same information to the department. Mr. Tompert stated that the team also plans to continue working with the Mesa Court representatives regarding their new protocol for diverting defendants with mental health issues, veterans and the homeless.

8. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Youth Diversity Education Team.

- Provide update on educating youth through the Cinema Series project.

Dr. Liuzzo advised that they are continuing to pilot the program at Dobson High School and the feedback received has been successful. The team has determined to continue plans to enhance the program at other high schools in the future.

- Provide an update on getting feedback from Mayor's Youth Committee.

Dr. Liuzzo explained that the team would like to connect with the Mayor's Youth Committee in order to better identify best practices for desensitizing youth on diversity related issues. The team has been placed on the Mayor's Youth Committee's September agenda for the discussion. Ms. Frias-Long questioned if other sources were identified to provide a more diverse representation of youth. In response, Dr. Liuzzo stated that the team agreed to meet with the Mayor's Youth Committee first, but would consider questioning other sources in the future. Dr. Liuzzo invited Ms. Frias-Long to join the committee to help identify those sources. Ms. Anderson also stated that she could provide some contacts of segmented youth when the time comes for further community outreach.

- Provide an update on assisting funding for the Mesa Police Department M.E.S.A. program.

Dr. Liuzzo provided a brief summary of the MPD program for at-risk youth occurring at Kino Jr. High. Dr. Liuzzo explained that the intentions of the team are to seek funding in order to provide the same program at more schools. Ms. Heap stated she was made aware that the current program is funded by a grant which will allow for other funding sources; therefore they can continue moving forward with their research.

- Report on a sex trafficking education campaign.

Dr. Liuzzo announced that the team has determined they will compose an awareness program regarding sex trafficking education. Team members are currently in the process of reaching out to community persons who can provide expertise at implementing such a program.

9. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Veterans Task Force.

- Report on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 VTF meeting.

Mr. Smothers stated that the progress of his report is positively moving forward. Ms. Anderson commented on Mr. Smother's ability to bridge the communication gaps among organizations. Ms. Anderson stated that there are a lot of organizations within in Mesa for veterans, but they did not appear to be connecting as well prior to the collaboration.

10. Hear and discuss conferences and/or meetings.

Ms. Anderson informed the board that Mercy Maricopa Integrated Health will be taking over the behavioral health system for Maricopa County on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014. Dr. Liuzzo announced that he attended February's Cinema Series presentation, 'The Trials of Muhammad Ali'. Dr. Liuzzo complemented the film and post viewing discussion as well as the Muhammad Ali exhibit.

11. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

- Phoenix Pride Parade on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

Ms. Heap informed of the event and suggested that members carpool.

- Next meeting will be held on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014.

12. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:07pm.

Submitted By:



Ruth Giese,  
Diversity Program Administrator